



# MEETING OF WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean

September 17 and 18, 2024. Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia







We, recognizing the commitments made to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), the Rio Conventions on the environment and their Gender Plans of Action, the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Montevideo Strategy, the Santiago Commitment and the Buenos Aires Commitment;

As women human rights defenders in environmental and territorial matters, in all of our diversity, from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, we have come together to reaffirm our individual and collective rights in the defence of our territories, peoples, communities and collectivities, both in rural and urban areas.

We also reaffirm that women are on the front line of defence of our territories, facing multiple structural forms of discrimination, racism and gender-based violence; recognising the critical situation of the environment as a consequence of the triple planetary crisis; and in view of the upcoming Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the Rio Conventions on the environment: COP 16 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), COP 29 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and COP 16 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), we agree and share with our States and international bodies the following recommendations:

**1**

**Ratify and effectively comply with** the International Labour Organisation Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.

2

**Ratify and effectively implement** the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazu Agreement) and develop its Gender Action Plan.

3

**Urgently ensure** that human rights defenders in environmental matters can continue their defence work in a safe and enabling environment, free from persecution, criminalisation, violence, attacks, threats and intimidation, incorporating culturally relevant protection measures and access to justice for women.

4

**Promote** the effective and equal participation of women human rights defenders in environmental matters in spaces of negotiation and political advocacy at all levels of governance, to ensure the diversity of perspectives in the construction of collective solutions, guaranteeing the co-responsibility of the States for the care.

5

**Build and strengthen** the capacities of women human rights defenders in environmental matters, leaders and promoters throughout the region, to influence decision-making in our territories, through continuous training processes with an intersectional, intergenerational, intercultural and decolonial approach.

6

**Generate and strengthen** spaces for dialogue between women human rights defenders in environmental matters and the negotiating delegations of the States participating in the Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the Rio Conventions on the environment and the Escazú Agreement, so that women's proposals for the defence of life are at the centre of the negotiations.

7

**Ensure** multimedia communication strategies in official languages and ancestral languages with inclusive language, to ensure that information is understandable and available in formats that are culturally relevant to each context and accessible to all people; and strengthen existing community communication strategies.

8

**Respect and support** the worldviews and traditional knowledge of our peoples, communities and collectivities, especially women's knowledge and practices; and guarantee their recovery, preservation, dissemination and intergenerational transfer, for their effective and substantive integration in biodiversity conservation, climate action and the fight against desertification.

9

**Ensure** direct access to financial resources for women-led initiatives to promote the implementation of environmental solutions in harmony with Mother Earth, as well as to ensure the continuity of women's leadership in the defence of life.

10

**Establish and strengthen** participatory monitoring mechanisms, including a system of indicators and the generation of data with a human rights and gender focus, that allow women human rights defenders in environmental matters to evaluate the implementation, impact and effectiveness of the agreements, decisions, policies and action plans derived from the Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the Rio Conventions on the environment and the Escazú Agreement.

11

**Articulate** a regional space for dialogue to participatively build an inter-conventional advocacy strategy for the Conferences of the Parties (COP) of the Rio Conventions on the environment and the Escazú Agreement, which guarantees the participation of women human rights defenders in environmental matters to strengthen the exercise of our rights and promote our leadership in environmental governance.

**Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia**

September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024



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The Meeting of Women Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters from Latin America and the Caribbean took place on September 17 and 18, 2024, in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. The event was organized by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), with the support of the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and in collaboration with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).